

REMARKS

This Amendment is made in conjunction with the filing of a Request For Continued Examination (RCE), and is responsive to the Office Action that was issued January 9, 2004.

Particularly herein, independent claims 11, 15, 19, and 24 have been amended to further specifically define the present invention, including with respect to the freeze-dried aspect thereof. Dependent claims 20-22 and 25-27 have been consistently amended. Claims 23 and 28 have been cancelled.

The present amendments are supported by the disclosure in the specification, e.g., page 5, first full paragraph, paragraph bridging pages 9-10, as well as by the Examples.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as amended herein further define over the prior art that has been cited, and it is respectfully submitted that the claims as amended herein render all claims novel and non-obvious with respect to the cited art of record.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT Under 37 CFR § 1.114
Appln. No. 10/062,425

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

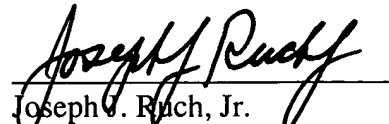
Respectfully submitted,

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